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# AGRICULTURAL LIBRARIES INFORMATION NOTES

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GREEN FIELDS: TWO  
HUNDRED YEARS OF  
LOUISIANA SUGAR;  
KEYNOTE ADDRESS  
AT THE  
NAL EXHIBIT OPENING  
July 9, 1981

By  
Glenn R. Conrad\*

A century ago, Charles Dudley Warner visited Louisiana and wrote an account of his odyssey which subsequently appeared in *Harper's Magazine*. This piece, like so many others dealing with Louisiana, contained all the writer's literary magic plus the time-tested, attractive ingredients of dark-eyed Creoles, undulating Spanish moss, sugar plantations, and colonnaded mansions.

This rather romantic "moonlight and magnolias" interpretation has been projected and embroidered ever since by short term researchers, imaginative writers, and Hollywood tinsel-makers. Crinolined skirts, white columns, and sugar plantations are usually sure-fire elements in the successful storyteller's tale of old Louisiana.

It was about two years ago that the staff of the Center for Louisiana Studies set out to determine whether these traditional images of Louisiana and its people involved in sugar culture are truly a reflection of fact.

Though born and reared in South Louisiana's sugar country, and always within a stone's throw of many antebellum relics of the sugar industry's past, I had never taken time to investigate the many-faceted story, real or imagined, of the region's principal agricultural pursuit.

*Preparing the  
land for sugarcane  
planting.  
West Baton Rouge  
Parish, LA.  
Photo: Center  
for Louisiana  
Studies*



My renewed interest was probably sparked by one of the frequently recurring announcements from outside Louisiana forecasting the imminent demise of the state's sugar industry. Thus, I suggested to my colleagues that we compile what we expected would be a photographic record of the last days of a proud part of Louisiana's heritage.

During the next nine months we crisscrossed the seventeen parishes (counties) of the state's sugar belt, meeting and talking with sugar growers and manufacturers and filming the sugar cycle. Our work, in local research centers and in the field, produced more than fourteen hundred photos of all aspects of Louisiana's sugar industry from its inception in the late eighteenth century to the present. Examining the fruit of our labors, we saw before us a pictorial record of one of the most amazing stories in the annals of American agriculture. Here, in black and white, was the remarkable account of the problems posed by growing sugarcane at this unusual degree of north latitude. More importantly, image after image revealed the continuing saga of human ingenuity which has met and overcome virtually every challenge. For the first time we were able to clearly examine the "state of the art" of sugar technology utilized by Louisiana growers and manufacturers to produce top-quality sugar in the region's unusual and often harsh environment.

We discovered that agricultural production in the rich Mississippi delta soil is, ironically, difficult at best. In addition to the area being vulnerable to periodic floods and hurricanes, the region experiences an annual rainfall in excess of sixty inches, has more than 120 days of ninety degrees plus temperatures, and an uncommonly large variety of fast-growing weeds and grasses.

Early settlers, therefore, discovered that the challenges to traditional temperate zone agriculture were many, frustrating and frequently ruinous. Cotton and corn rotted, wheat and indigo withered, tobacco was impossible to grow. In the face of these realities, the region's farmers turned to sugarcane, a tropical culture. They did this knowing that Louisiana possesses only a subtropical climate and that growing sugarcane would be, at best, a gamble. It would be a race with the clock to grow and harvest a sugar crop before the last fall frosts killed and ruined the cane. The Louisianians thus set out to do in eight months what sugar growers in the tropics had the luxury of fourteen months to accomplish. Truly, as historian J. Carlyle Sitterson has noted, "the sheer survival of the Louisiana sugar industry is a testimonial to the ingenuity and endurance of the sugar farmer."

In addition to the environmental problems, the Louisiana sugar industry has confronted and survived, during the past two centuries, a civil war, recurring labor shortages, wildly fluctuating commodity prices, destructive plant diseases, uncommon demands for capital investment, and, most recently, fuel shortages and urban sprawl.




*Sugarcane worker  
checking the maturity  
of crop.  
West Baton Rouge  
Parish, LA.  
Photo: Center for  
Louisiana Studies*



This succession of problems may have caused the Louisiana industry to falter on occasion, but it has never succeeded in overwhelming it. In every instance, innovation and imagination have healed and rejuvenated the industry.

Thus, we at the Center for Louisiana Studies discovered that instead of compiling a pictorial memorial to the Louisiana sugar industry, we had put together a visual record of a most amazing chapter in the continuing transformation of age-old agricultural pursuits through technological innovation.

We also discovered that the typical Louisiana sugar grower of today bears little, if any, resemblance to the paperback and Hollywood versions of the Louisiana sugar planter. Those images of the sugar planter, arrayed in white, sipping mint juleps on the veranda of a great mansion bathed in the scent of magnolias and crepe myrtle elicits nothing more than a bemused smile from today's sugar grower who, after a day of dealing with the realities of sugar production, sits down in blue jeans to drink a beer in the den of his ranch-style home and watch his favorite TV program. 

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## DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

### USDA REORGANIZATION

It has been some time since I have had the opportunity to speak to you through this column. My purpose today is to tell you how the USDA reorganization, announced by Secretary Block on June 17, affects us here at the National Agricultural Library.

The Science and Education Administration (SEA) has been abolished and the major program elements have been returned to agency status. This is much as it was before the reorganization in 1978. Our new reporting line is to Anson R. Bertrand, Director of Science and Education (S&E). The basic mode of operation for Science and Education will be decentralized, coordinated by overall goals, policies, and program priorities set by the Director in consultation with agency heads.

Many staff members here have told me that they are pleased to have the NAL name up front again. They never took very well to TIS.

Organizationally, three functional units, formerly with TIS, have now been assigned to other agencies. They continue to share space in the NAL building. The Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) has become a unit of the Human Nutrition Information Service (HNIS), a new agency under the Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services. The Current Research Information System (CRIS) returns to its former unit, the Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS), and the EMIS/SEMIS systems go back to the Extension Service (ES). The Current Awareness Literature Service (CALS) will remain with NAL because of its special link to the document delivery service.

During the past month we have been very busy rewriting and reestablishing the administrative regulations that govern what we do. As soon as these are in place we will distribute them as a supplement to ALIN.

This reorganization has not been a major jolt for us. As I defend the 1983 budget, however, I see a shock wave that we are not escaping. In September of this year we will have 20 fewer full-time personnel than we had when we moved into the new building twelve years ago. I need not tell any of you that many fewer hands is resulting in less productivity. We are being forced to reset our sights from an era of expansion and blue sky thinking to one in which we must fight to sustain what has been passed to us by four generations of dedicated librarians. This means that for the next several years it will be back to basics, and our primary mission to supply good library service to American agriculture.

Richard A. Farley

### AGRICULTURAL ROUNDTABLE

The Food and Nutrition Division of Special Libraries is trying to identify librarians and information specialists interested in forming an agriculture roundtable. There is a significant number of agricultural libraries whose staff members do not belong to SLA. This roundtable can meet the needs of these potential SLA members as well.

A program is being planned for the annual conference in Detroit, 1982. If you are interested in the roundtable, please send your name and address for the mailing to:

Mary E. Aversa  
Chairman, Agricultural Roundtable  
Doane-Western, Inc.  
8900 Manchester Road  
St. Louis, MO 63144  
(314) 968-1000





**NEW SERIALS  
RECEIVED  
AT NAL**

*Analytical Chemistry Symposia Series.*  
Amsterdam, N.Y., Elsevier Scientific  
Pub., Co. irr. Vol. 2, 1980-  
QD271.A1C47

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Vol. 19, 1980- 287An4

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*Cryptogamie, Bryologia, Lichenologie.*  
Paris, Laboratoire de cryptogamie,  
Museum national d'histoire naturelle.  
q. T. 1, 1980- QK534.C7

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T. 1, 1980- QK600.C7

*Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science.*  
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Brackish-Water Sciences Association.  
m. Vol. 12, 1981- GB451.E72

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tions Marketing. q. Vol. 56, 1980-  
389.78F32

*Journal of Tissue Culture Methods.*  
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*Government Publications Review. Part A.*  
*Research Articles.* Elmsford, N.Y.,  
Pergamon Press. irr. Vol. 7A, 1980-  
Z7164.G7G6

*Government Publications Review. Part B.*  
*Acquisitions Guide.* Elmsford, N.Y.,  
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*Information Industry Market Place.* New  
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Z674.3.I53

*Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*  
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73, 1980- 448.9RB14

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1980- G3.A8

*Progressive Farmer. Kentucky-Tennessee.*  
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*Progressive Farmer. Southeast.*  
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*Ethanol Fuels; Use, Production, &*  
*Economics.* A product of the Solar Energy  
Information Data Bank. (Golden, CO.)  
Solar Energy Research Institute, 1981.  
Price unknown. Order from: National  
Technical Information Service, 5285 Port  
Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161. Cite  
order number SERI/SP-751-1018.

A text for colleges in alcohol  
fuels production education. Wide-  
spread distribution has been made  
to land-grant colleges and univer-  
sities; members of Association of  
Agricultural Schools, Colleges,  
and Universities; state experiment  
stations and extension services.



## AGRICULTURAL TRANSLATIONS

This column is an alert to selected new receipts at NAL. They are available thru loan request (AD-245) to USDA personnel. Paid photoduplication to non-USDA persons is available (\$2/10 pages or fraction thereof per citation) Trans. No. and citation MUST be on request. Send to:

Lending Division  
National Agricultural Library  
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture  
Beltsville, MD 20705

Bokshitskii, M.N. On a Method for Predicting Polymer Durability. Translated from Russian: *Vysokomolekulyarnye soedineniya*, A(XXII): 2380-2384, 1980. Trans. No. 27252.

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Saurat, P., et.al. Immunofluorescence in Serological Diagnosis of Brucellosis in Cattle. Translated from French: *Cah. Med. Vet.*, 45(7): 18-30, 1976. Trans. No. 27320.

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Tabachkova, T.P., et.al. The Determination of Tall Oil in Black Liquor. Translated from Russian: *Gidroliznaia i lesokhimicheskaya promyshlennost*, (8): 10-11, 1980. Trans. No. 27251.

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## QUICK BIBLIOGRAPHY SERIES

The bibliographies in this series are primarily computerized online or batch bibliographies emanating from searches performed by the NAL Reference Staff in response to customer requests.

Searches are selected for inclusion based on the currency of the topic, interest among clientele, relative length (approximately 150 citations or more) and probable value to a larger audience. All titles in this series will be listed for six months. Revisions or updates will be renumbered and reannounced. Only one copy of a title will be sent; however, requestors may make copies. To request a copy of a Quick Bibliography send the title, series number, and a return addressed label to:

Reference Branch, Room 302  
National Agricultural Library  
Beltsville, MD 20705

NAL--BIBL.--81-09. *Guayule, 1969-March 1981*. 54 citations from AGRICOLA. Search by J. Rafats. April 1981.

NAL--BIBL.--81-10. *Wind Erosion and Its Control, 1969-Feb. 1981*. 229 citations from AGRICOLA. Search by Charles N. Bebee. April 1981.

NAL--BIBL.--81-11. *Erosion of Slopes and Gullies, 1969-1980*. 129 citations from AGRICOLA. Search by Jayne T. MacLean. April 1981.

NAL--BIBL.--81-12. *Louisiana Sugarcane Industry, 1969-1981*. 145 citations from AGRICOLA. Search by Jayne T. MacLean. June 1981.

NAL--BIBL.--81-13. *Sugarcane Production Jan. 1980-May 1981*. 179 citations from AGRICOLA. Search by Jayne T. MacLean. May 1981.

NAL--BIBL.--81-14. *The Mediterranean Fruit Fly, *Ceratitis Capitata*, 1970-June 1981*. 285 citations from AGRICOLA. Search by Maria G. Pisa and Henry G. Gilbert. June 1981.

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*Products, 1970-June 1981*. 58 citations from AGRICOLA. Search by Jayne T. MacLean. July 1981.

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NAL--BIBL.--81-19. *Interaction of Nitrogen with Cowpeas 1975-May 1981*. 23 citations from AGRICOLA. Searched by William Longenecker. July 1981.

Clearances have been given to USDA authors to compile or publish the titles listed below. These titles have not been published as yet and therefore, are not available for distribution. Upon publication, they will be cited in the "New Bibliographies" or "New Publications of Note" column of this publication.

*Bibliography on Nutrition and Aging*. For information contact: Robyn Frank, Head, Food and Nutrition Information Center, Room 304, National Agricultural Library, USDA, Beltsville, MD 20705.

*Bibliography on Rare Herbal Holdings in the National Agricultural Library*. For information contact the compilers: Alan and Donna Fusonie, Maintenance Section, Information Access Division, Room 301A, National Agricultural Library, USDA, Beltsville, MD 20705.

*Economics of Energy Conservation in Agriculture*. For information contact: Mary Lassanyi, Head, Reference Section, Information Access Division, Room 302, National Agricultural Library, Beltsville, MD 20705.

*Maternal Infant Nutrition Bibliography*. For information contact: Robyn Frank, Head, Food and Nutrition Information Center, Room 304, National Agricultural Library, USDA, Beltsville, MD 20705. 



## AGRICULTURE DATEBOOK

October 5-7: *5th Biennial Wind Energy Conference*. Washington, D.C. Contact: Conference Development Branch, SERI, 1617 Cole Boulevard, Golden, CO 80401. (303) 231-7361.

October 6: *Human Nutrition Contemporary Controversies*. Lincoln University, Jefferson City, MO. Contact: E.M. Wilson, College of Applied Science & Technology, Lincoln University, Jefferson City, MO 65101.

October 6-8: *National Energy Workshop*. (ECOP approved) Fort Collins, CO. Also Washington, D.C., November 16-18. Contact: Conference Development Branch SERI, 1617 Cole Boulevard, Golden, CO 80401. (303) 231-7361.

October 25-30: *American Society for Information Science, 44th Annual Meeting*. Washington, D.C. Contact: Carol Wasserman, ASIS '81 Public Relations Committee, 1010 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

November 2-5: *USDA Outlook Conference*. Washington, D.C. Contact: Sally Michael, WFAOSB, Rm. 3510 So. Agri. Bldg., U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

November 8-11: *National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges*. Contact: Ruth N. Smith, Suite 710, 1 Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036. Tel: (202) 293-7120.

November 9-12: *National Extension Wildlife and Fisheries Workshop*. Baton Rouge, LA. Contact: James Fowler, Ext. Wildlife Specialist, Louisiana State University, Cooperative Extension Service, Knapp Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70805. Tel: (504) 388-4141.


November 11-13: *Small Farms in a Changing World: Prospects for the Eighties*. Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas. Contact: Farming Systems Research Symposium, International Agricultural Programs, Waters Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506. (913) 532-5715.

November 15-18: *Research for Small Farms*. Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Science and Education Administration, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Beltsville, MD. Contact: Special Symposium Office, Room 230, Bldg., 003, BARC-West, USDA, Beltsville, MD 20705.

December 8-10: *Fifth International On-Line Information Meeting*. London, England. Contact: Organizing Secretary, Online Information Meetings, Online Review, Learned Information, Besselsleigh Road, Abingdon, Oxford OX 13 6LG, England. Tel: 0865-730275. Telex: 837704.

1982

January 10-15: *Third International Conference on Goat Production and Disease*. Tucson, AZ. Contact: Kent Leach, Publisher, Dairy Goat Journal, P.O. Box 1808, Scottsdale, AZ 85252. Tel: (602) 991-4628.

February 2-6: *International Conference on Chemistry and World Food Supplies--The New Frontier (CHEMRAWN II)*. Manila, Philippines. Contact: Joyce Torio, CHEMRAWN II Coordinating Office, International Food Policy Research Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. 

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